

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 /148 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:JEBRIGGS

APPROVED BY NEA/P:JEBRIGGS

S/PRS - MR. KING (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. SAVAGE

H - MISS FOLGER (INFO)

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P 282034Z NOV 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL
EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING
NOVEMBER 28, 1973:

QUOTE: Q. THERE ARE STORIES OUT OF ATHENS TODAY SAYING
THAT NO AMERICAN DIPLOMATS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SEE ANY OF THE
NEW MEMBERS OF THE NEW GREEK JUNTA. I AM WONDERING -- CAN
YOU TELL US WHAT THE SITUATION IS? ARE WE IN CONTACT WITH
THESE PEOPLE?

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A. WELL, I AM AWARE OF THOSE STORIES, AND I THINK ALL I CAN

REALLY SAY ABOUT GREECE AT THIS EXTRAORDINARILY EARLY PERIOD, AND QUITE TRANSITORY SITUATION, WHEN A NEW GROUP IS TAKING CHARGE OF THE GOVERNMENT, IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO OCCASION, SO FAR, IN THIS EARLY PERIOD FOR CONTACTS BETWEEN THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND OUR OWN AUTHORITIES, AND AS FAR AS I KNOW IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER OR HOW EXTENSIVELY THEY HAVE UNDERTAKEN CONTACTS WITH ANY REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER NATIONS. AND I THINK PERHAPS IT IS PREMATURE TO TRY TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS AT ALL FROM THAT.

Q. ONE OF THE STORIES SAID THAT TWO OF OUR DIPLOMATS ACTUALLY WERE TURNED AWAY. I AM WONDERING IF YOU CAN CONFIRM THAT OR NOT.

A. NO, I CAN'T. I WILL LOOK INTO THAT. BUT I CAN'T CONFIRM THAT. BUT IF THERE HAVE BEEN, I FEEL IT REASONABLE TO SAY THIS MUCH, ANY REAL PROBLEMS ABOUT INITIAL EXCHANGES WITH THE AUTHORITIES IN ATHENS, I AM SURE I WOULD HAVE KNOWN ABOUT IT.

Q. ALSO IN REFERENCE TO GREECE, THE STATEMENT THE OTHER DAY WAS THAT THERE WAS AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO CARRY OUT ON THE SECOND STAGE OF THE HOMEPORTING. IS IT ALSO YOUR UNDERSTANDING THAT ALTHOUGH THERE IS AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, IT WILL ALSO BE NECESSARY TO HAVE FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SECOND PHASE OF HOME PORTING?

A. WE HAVE HAD AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, BUT THERE WILL BE CERTAINLY OTHER DISCUSSIONS. NOW, HOW YOU CHARACTERIZE THOSE DISCUSSIONS, I COULDN'T SAY. BUT IT IS NORMAL WHEN YOU HAVE AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO WORK OUT DETAILS, YOU HAVE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

Q. REGARDING U.S. AND GREEK ASSOCIATION WE ARE SPEAKING OF AT WHAT LEVEL OF CONTACT?

A. LET ME MAKE CLEAR WHAT IS INVOLVED BY THE TERM "CONTACT". WHEN YOU WORK IN AN EMBASSY, IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU EVERY DAY HAVE PHYSICAL CONTACT, PHYSICAL EXCHANGES. IN THIS EARLY STAGE, AS I MENTIONED, THERE HAS BEEN NO PARTICULAR REASON WHY WE HAVE HAD TO RUSH TO DO SOMETHING.

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AND WHEN I SAY WE ARE CONTINUING DAY-TO-DAY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS, WE ARE OPERATING IN ATHENS AS AN EMBASSY WOULD NORMALLY OPERATE, AND UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WE HAVE NO INDICATION OF ANY KIND TO LEAD US TO BELIEVE THAT THAT DOES NOT ACCURATELY CHARACTERIZE THE SITUATION OF THAT EMBASSY. IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT IN THE FIRST VERY HECTIC DAYS OF A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT THAT THOSE NEW OFFICIALS ARE GOING TO HAVE TIME TO TALK TO ONE OR ANOTHER EMBASSY.

THEY MAY NOT. BUT THEY COME TO THAT IN DUE COURSE. AND THE COURSE HAS NOT ARRIVED AS YET. BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE VERY WRONG TO READ INTO THAT THERE IS ANYTHING OTHER THAN A CONTINUING DAY-TO-DAY WORKING RELATIONSHIP AS WE HAVE DESCRIBED IT. THAT IS THE WAY WE FEEL THE SITUATION CAN BE ACCURATELY DESCRIBED.

Q. WOULD THIS COVER THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE GROUP AS WELL, INASMUCH AS A NUMBER OF THE GENERALS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN PURGED IN THE COUP?

A. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION TO INDICATE ANYTHING OTHER THAN JUST WHAT I HAVE SAID SO FAR. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PRESS CONFERENCES, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE233429
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JEBRIGGS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973117/aaaaaeyk.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29-Aug-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <31-Jan-2002 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL
TAGS: PFOR, GR
To: ATHENS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005